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THE MAPLE LEAF AND THE UNION JACK

A BRIEF STUDY OF BRITISH CONNECTION

BY

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A BRIEF STUDY OF BRITISH CONNECTION.

CANADIANS have a great heritage, a country vast in extent, stretching from ocean to ocean and from the great lakes to the North Pole ; a land teeming with minerals, and covered with valuable forests ; possessing the most fertile wheat-fields in the world and the most productive fisheries known to the nations—a country, in short, which includes within its borders the richest natural resources of any territory upon the face of the globe. Coupled with these material advantages the people of Canada possess a local history of which they may well feel proud, and a political continuity which carries them back through all the annals of British power, valour and progress. Composed of two races which have for a hundred years fought under the same flag, battled for the same measures of freedom, and struggled for the same material development, the Canadian people can look back with nothing but pride to that historic period when a great French Empire existed in North America, and when those two powerful nations fought for the sovereignty of a continent and the glory of their respective countries. The heroic inspirations of Champlain and Frontenac, the sieges and stormings of Quebec and Port Royal and Louisbourg, where

So often borne in war's alternate chance
The flag of England and the flag of France,

are as much the heritage of English Canadians as the annals of Chateauguay or Queenston Heights are the pride of French-Canadians and the proof of our continued and common allegiance.

History binds us to Britain. We have a mutual interest in a mighty past, a similar regard for the men who

have preserved the liberties of England and the world, or battled at home for the constitutional freedom of the people. These names are the heritage of Canadians and that history is a beacon to the continued development of Canadian thought, and literature, and politics. Nor has the union been one of mere sentiment; material advantages have been many, and the dangers averted from the youthful progress of the rising nation have been almost innumerable. As the Hon. George Brown once said (Sept., 1864): "This Province, like the other colonies of the British Empire, was founded on a compact entered into between the Crown and the people; an assurance was virtually given to those who emigrated to this Province that they should be protected by all the strength of British arms. And nobly has Great Britain fulfilled that promise. Never has she hesitated for a moment to expend her blood and treasure in defending her Colonial Empire."

To-day, after a century's growth under the guardianship of the British flag and with the constant development which has accompanied our position of consequent security and immunity from attack, we can reach out the arms of a youthful nation, and over the rolling waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific may echo the refrain of the poet's lines:—

By thy fair salubrious clime,
By thy scenery sublime,
By thy mountains, streams and woods,
By thine ever-lasting floods—
If greatness dwells beneath the skies,
Thou to greatness shall arise.

At this stage in our history, when the future presents the most vivid possibilities, a section of the people, some young, some old, have come to the conclusion that British Connection, the basis of our system of Government, the fundamental principle of our laws and the embodiment of the experience of the past in our constitution and polity, is of no particular value, and may be abrogated in the near future, or menaced in the present, without serious injury to our national prospects or to our material interests. The youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity, and it probably lies

with the younger men of the day to say whether this view will eventually prevail. The issue is becoming more and more plain, and is merging into a contest between the element which wishes to see a great British-Canadian nation established on this northern continent, and the classes which are gradually crystallizing in favour of an American union. Disraeli in addressing an audience of young Englishmen once said: "I give you the counsel which I have ever given to youth—I tell you to aspire. I believe the man who does not look up will look down." So it is with this young Dominion. If the class of men whom Chauncy M. Depew referred to the other day as "weak-kneed, spindle-shanked, watery-brained dyspeptics who despair of this republic," should obtain the upper hand in Canada, it will prove the bane of British connection and the death of our national independence.

The great bulk of Canadians, however, are at present in no danger of being permeated with such opinions, and the mass of them are undoubtedly British in sentiment as well as Canadian in their patriotic regard for the land of their birth or home.

Probably, also, in the words of the Rochester Morning *Herald* a few days since, they "have no sympathy with that sublimated sentiment which derides patriotism as clan-nish and provincial and aims to throw down the walls of home and native and adopted land. They believe men are better for having a country, a flag, an allegiance for which they are willing to do and dare and die." The future, however, is always uncertain, and should the rising generation, which must eventually take the place of the men who are now controlling the affairs of the Dominion and trying to mould its destiny, become luke-warm in their British allegiance, indifferent to British connection, and averse to development along the lines of continued British union, the condition of affairs will be worse than perplexing, and the result almost inevitably absorption in the Southern Republic.

What, then, are the great principles embodied in the familiar phrase, "British connection," and what are the

benefits which we now derive from the union, or the advantages which we may hope to obtain in times to come? Upon the answer to these questions which may grow up in the hearts of Canadians really depends the future of this Dominion.

The first principle involved is undoubtedly that of maintaining intact those British institutions which our fathers have transferred to Canadian soil and which we have shaped into a form suited to this "crowned republic," and the circumstances attendant upon a federal union. The sign and symbol of British union, the assumed basis of all our institutions, the central figure of the constitution in Canada, as in Great Britain, is the Sovereign. In the eloquent statement of Mr. Gladstone: "The Sovereign in England is the symbol of the nation's unity, and the apex of the social structure; the maker (with advice) of the laws; the supreme governor of the church; the fountain of justice; the sole source of honour; the person to whom all military, all naval, all civil service is rendered, she is the symbol of law; she is by law, and setting apart the metaphysics, and the abnormal incidents, of revolution, the source of power. Parliament and ministries pass, but she abides in life-long duty; and she is to them as the oak in the forest is to the annual harvest in the field." Not less effective in this connection are the words of Lord Rosebery when he said: "The Queen represents to us much in this country, and much all over the world. She represents to us an ancient dynasty, a glorious history, a past which can never be forgotten, and a present which cannot be surpassed. She represents to us more than that, viz.: all the English system and home happiness on which in reality British society rests." Firm and yet flexible, stable and yet submissive to the will of the people, the British limited monarchy is a system worthy of being conserved at home and preserved throughout the Empire.

Representative of the Sovereign in Canada and acting as the local head of our Federal system is the Governor-General. Under existing conditions his appointment is the chief practical evidence of continued union between

the countries, and might easily become the medium of great Imperial services to the Dominion. In the event of trouble with the United States, difficulties with other countries or diplomatic negotiations with foreign powers, he at once becomes the central figure around which turns the whole wheel of State, and the somewhat intricate perplexities of a vast Imperial system. Raised above local jealousies or friction, impartial and representative in Canada and the functions of the Sovereign in Britain, the Governor-General embodies the principle of responsible Government, and all that historic value of British institutions which an elective head of the State combined with parliamentary procedure and a practically elective Premier would of course at once destroy. As Lord Dufferin so well put it: "He is a person dissociated from all sectional interests, prejudices and passions, who can never become stronger than the people's Parliament or divide the national vote; a representative of all that is august, stable and sedate in the Government, the history and traditions of the country; incapable of partisanship; without adherents to reward or opponents to oust from office; docile to the suggestions of his Ministers, and yet securing to the people the certainty of being able to get rid of an administration or Parliament the moment either had forfeited their confidence."

How different is such an official and such a mode of appointment from that existing in the United States, of which Mr. Goldwin Smith wrote a few years since: "A national conflict every four years for the Presidency, and the enormous patronage that is now annexed to it, must bring everything that is bad in the nation to the top, and will end in the domination of scoundrels. The moral atmosphere is darkened with calumny, bribery and corruption, and all their fatal effects upon national character. How can the political character of any nation withstand forever the virus of evil passion and corruption which these vast faction fights infuse?"

Perhaps, however, no better or more brilliant description of the historic greatness and importance of British

institutions was ever penned than that by Benjamin Disraeli in a letter addressed to Lord Lyndhurst some sixty years ago. It is well worth reproduction and bears the ring of an enthusiastic and eloquent patriotism: "If neither ancient ages nor the more recent experience of our newer time can supply us with a parallel instance of a free-government founded on the broadest basis of popular rights, yet combining with democratic liberty, aristocratic security and monarchical convenience;—if the refined spirit of Greece, if the brilliant genius of feudal Italy, if the great Roman soul, alike failed in realizing this great result, let us cling with increased devotion to the matchless creation of our ancestors, and honour with still deeper feelings of gratitude and veneration the English Constitution. That Constitution established civil equality in a rude age, and anticipated by centuries in its beneficent practice the sublime theories of modern philosophy; having made us equal it has kept us free. If it has united equality with freedom, so also it has connected freedom with glory. It has established an Empire which combines the durability of Rome with the adventure of Carthage. It has at the same time secured us the most skilful agriculture, the most extended commerce, the most ingenious manufactures, victorious armies and invincible fleets. Nor has the intellectual might of England under its fostering auspices been less distinguished than its imperial spirit, its manly heart, or its national energy, and it has secured to me in common with every subject of this realm a right—the enjoyment of which I would not exchange for 'The ermined stole, the starry breast and coroneted brow'—the right of expressing my free thoughts to a free people."

And so it has been in Canada, and so it will continue to be if we preserve those principles of political action and government embodied in the maintenance of the British system of responsible ministers and a free Parliament, with a Sovereign possessing limited powers, but affording to our constitutional structure that element of stability and solidity which distinguishes such institutions from those of the American Republic.

But it is asked why these institutions cannot be preserved in a state of complete national independence. Mr. D'Alton McCarthy, M.P., voiced this often unspoken sentiment when he said a couple of years ago in addressing the Young Men's Conservative Association of Collingwood : " I have dreamed, gentlemen, and I suppose some of you have, of Canadian independence, but I have come to recognize, and so will you when you are as old as I am, that it is an utter impossibility. Canada in the future must either be part and parcel of the British Empire or annexed to the United States." The reasons for such a statement are manifold. Independence, as far as we can see at present, would constitute a position of weakness and *dependence* upon the good or bad will of the Republic ; it would involve us in a quarrel with the Mother Country without just cause, because, whatever may have been the state of public opinion twenty years ago, any British Government which permitted Canada to separate from the Empire without the most powerful protests could not continue to hold office a day ; it would possibly involve civil war, and perhaps the ultimate armed interference of the United States ; it would lessen our material credit to such a degree as to prevent the floating of our liabilities, except under exorbitant interest ; and would render the holding of our Provinces together a matter of grave doubt.

The probabilities are that the whole system of our government would undergo a change in the direction of Republicanism, and our Federal system would snap under the strain of different views and contests regarding different principles of administration and union which would ensue. If free trade with the States accompanied the separation, the consequences of the closer relations and the abrogation of British sentiment would almost assuredly carry us into the Republic, while, if we tried to stand alone without the cohesion of a common French and English allegiance to the British Crown and Constitution, it is probable that the force of circumstances would break up the new Republic and drive its fragments one by one into the American union.

In any case British institutions would be gone, and the liabilities incident to an independent existence would be so great as to seriously retard our progress for many years to come. Far better to follow the eloquent advice of Principal Grant, and "Stand fast, Canada, against all enemies, especially those of our own household, who would strike the flag or stain the national honour; against factions, animated by greed and party spite, reckless of the burdens they impose on the country or the difficulties they are preparing for our children; against the stray bigots who revive the feuds of the old world, and the fanatics who are sleepless enemies of civil and religious liberty; against all who would divide that they might destroy. Stand fast, Canada."

The last two decades reveal a wonderful expansion in Canadian material development, partly as a result of the credit and national confidence created by the maintenance of British Connection, and partly by the evolution of the national policy of protection :—

	1868.	1888.
Deposits chartered banks	\$32,808,104	\$112,860,700
Deposits savings banks	4,360,692	51,861,984
Letters and post cards sent	18,100,000	96,786,000
Miles of railway	2,522	12,292
Receipts from freight	12,211,158	24,581,047
Fire insurance in Canada	188,359,809	633,523,697
Total imports and exports	131,027,532	201,097,630
Export animals and products	6,893,167	24,719,297
Export cheese	617,354	8,928,242

while the development of our export trade is still better exhibited in the ensuing table of four periods, comprising five years each :—

Total exports 1868-72	\$283,410,368
" " 1873-77	363,511,828
" " 1878-82	381,402,883
" " 1883-87	405,384,877

The succeeding five years, if averaged, will amount to a total of at least \$460,000,000.

British connection, however, affords benefits other than the preservation of free institutions, the consolidation of our present constitution and the growth of com-

merce. It opens up a prospect of extended interchange and the development of a trade with the Mother Country by means of discriminatory duties which would be impossible were separation to take place or free trade be inaugurated with the United States. Even now we are doing well, as the following table of exports will show :—

	1879.	1890.
Produce of the mine.....	\$3,082,900	\$4,855,757
Produce of the fisheries.....	6,928,871	8,461,906
Produce of the forest.....	13,261,459	26,179,136
Animals and agricultural products..	33,729,068	37,015,025
Manufactures	2,700,281	5,741,184

Only a pronounced pessimist could detract from these evidences of prosperity, such an one perhaps as Emerson had in mind when he wrote that "the misery of man appears like childish petulance when we explore the steady and prodigal provision that has been made for his support and delight on this green ball which floats him through the heavens." Seriously, however, it appears as if events were rapidly approaching a point in England when she will be willing and able to discriminate in favour of Colonial trade, in return for a similar discrimination in favour of British products. The motto of men of action in Britain may now be found in Lord Salisbury's pregnant words at the Mansion House last year : "We are anxious above all things to conserve, to unify, to strengthen the Empire of the Queen, because it is to the trade that is carried on within the Empire that we look for the vital force of the commerce of this country"; and in the remarks by Mr. Gladstone, May 12, 1890: "When we pass over the countries of Europe, together with the great Republic of America, we see that, although the doctrines of free trade have never been unconditionally accepted in any of these countries, yet there was a kind of qualified progress towards them. That progress was then exchanged for a stationary condition of opinion, and of late that opinion has been actively retrogressive."

The McKinley Bill and its restriction of British exports to the United States, Brazil, Cuba, Spain, Venezuela and

other countries through the Reciprocity clause ; the pending French tariff ; the coming Australian Federal tariff ; the proposal in Canada to discriminate against the Mother Country in favour of the Republic ; the Russian increase of duties ; and the European Trade League, are all finger-posts pointing to the coming time when the trade policy of the Empire will be brought into harmony with circumstances.

The relative progress of trade in the following countries also reveals a significant condition of affairs :—

Countries.	1854.	1889.	Each £100 inc. to
Russia.....	£21,485,000	£119,797,000	£557
Belgium.....	55,417,000	244,795,000	458
Sweden.....	8,771,000	37,442,000	426
Spain.....	18,120,000	69,456,000	380
Holland.....	52,414,000	193,391,000	368
Norway.....	5,467,000	18,015,000	329
France.....	134,875,000	404,952,000	300
Portugal.....	7,427,000	21,743,000	292
United States.....	111,335,000	309,903,000	278
Great Britain..	268,210,000	742,344,000	276
Denmark.....	10,732,000	28,536,000	265
Austria.....	42,675,000	112,945,000	264

It is therefore not surprising that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach should have observed the other day in addressing the London Chamber of Commerce : " I commend to you, as one who desires above all things to promote and to complete the unity of this disjointed Empire, this great question of the importance of the commercial relations between ourselves and our Colonies ; and I do believe that, looking to the means which you have for ascertaining the opinion of the great commercial community of this metropolis, looking to the opportunities which you have of bringing the subject under public consideration, you may, if you choose, do a great work 'towards that which will be for the permanent benefit of our country.' " Even now, without any discrimination, the benefit to England of her external empire is obvious as the following table of British exports to certain countries per head of their population will show :—

	£.	s.	d.
Russia.....	0	1	3
Germany.....	0	7	4
France.....	0	8	3
United States.....	0	10	3
British North America.....	1	13	1
Australia.....	6	19	10

It may indeed be well said in the words of the late Lord Carnarvon: "You have, in the first place, a vast Empire, vast in area, population and resources—such as we may honestly say the world's history holds no counterpart. It is the first and foremost of its kind. Within the compass of that great Empire you have all the products of nature which can be named, from the most snowy climates to the most tropical. It is what the old Greek philosophers called a 'self-sufficing world.'"

Summing up, it may be pointed out that the present interchange between the ten principal divisions of the Empire is as follows:—

United Kingdom.....	£220,000,000
Indian Empire.....	140,000,000
Australasia.....	63,000,000
Canada and Newfoundland.....	30,000,000
Cape of Good Hope.....	19,000,000
Straits Settlements.....	16,000,000
West Indies, etc.....	9,500,000
Ceylon.....	6,500,000
Natal.....	5,500,000
Mauritius.....	4,750,000

If this commerce be properly promoted by means of favouring duties, who can be found to deny that a marvellous monetary value will be added to the present benefit of maintaining British connection! Now Britain is our best market; then it would not only be a source of demand for what we produce, but a tremendous incentive to increased production and quadrupled commerce. A British duty upon foreign breadstuffs would make Canada the real, instead of the potential, granary of the world.

Another important consideration in connection with this question is the investment of British funds in Canada, and the golden links of capital and credit which do so much and will do so much more to hold the Empire in

unity. The money lent by Great Britain to the Colonial Governments during a period of fourteen years will illustrate this argument.

	1871.	1885.
Australasia.....	£39,040,000	£140,897,000
Crown Colonies.....	3,663,000	6,303,000
North America.....	16,890,000	54,000,000
South Africa.....	1,850,000	25,434,000

or an increase from £61,000,000 to £226,000,000. In 1889 the total was £242,000,000. The private investments in colonial stocks had increased according to the income tax returns by £74,000,000, and decreased in foreign stocks by £71,000,000. Could such a result have taken place under independence and insecurity? British connection is therefore obviously promoting the development of the country by the investment of capital and the enhancement of credit and the inevitable inference is that if these premises be correct, if these conclusions are of the slightest value, then the maintenance of British connection, loyalty to Crown and country, faithfulness to our allegiance and institutions, is the truest and best policy for British and French-Canadians, and is indeed the path of honour, of profit, and of material welfare.

Loyalty is no longer a sentiment to be ashamed of ; it is now once more as in days of old a proof of honour and honesty, national and personal, and no people are more proud, and justly so, of their allegiance to their country and loyalty to their flag than are the Americans. As President Harrison said recently on his return from a trip through the Republic : " Nothing has been so impressive in all this journey as the magnificent spirit of patriotism which pervades our people. I have seen enough American flags to wrap the world around. The school children have waved it joyously everywhere, and many a time in some lonely country house I have seen a man or woman or little boy come to the door of the cabin as we hurry by, and wave the starry banner in greeting to our train."

So may it be in Canada. The unity of the Empire and the maintenance of our British institutions and connection is pregnant with good or ill to the world, and it is

more than folly, it is criminal, to treat disruption in a flippant or indifferent manner. No better words than those of Colonel Howard Vincent, M.P., could be used to sum up this great question: "For the United Kingdom the stake is a past expenditure of fathomless treasure, the investment of £2,000,000,000, an annual trade of £200,000,000, markets under our own flag of unlimited extent; our very existence as a great nation, as an industrial community, as Mistress of the Seas. For the Colonies the stake is an inexhaustible supply of capital so long as there is the guarantee of security afforded by the solidarity of the whole, markets also spread over the globe, the prestige of Imperial power and the solid advantage of powerful fleets."

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